

Message Text

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70

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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON, NP

SUBJECT: CORONATION: ACCOMMODATION OF OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES

1. THE GON FEELS STRONGLY THAT OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES TO THE CORONATION, AS GUESTS OF HIS MAJESTY, SHOULD STAY IN THE ACCOMMODATIONS WHICH THE GON IS ARRANGING FOR THEM, I.E.; IN THE SOALTEE HOTEL OR, IN SOME CASES, THE ANNAPURNA. THIS ATTITUDE OF THE GON, NOW A FIRM POLICY, HAS EMERGED, AS BRITISH AMBASSADOR SCOTT HAS INFORMED US, IN DISCUSSIONS THE BRITISH HAVE BEEN HAVING WITH THE NEPALESE ABOUT WHERE PRINCE CHARLES IS TO STAY DURING THE CORONATION. STARTING FROM THE PROPOSITION THAT PRINCE CHARLES WOULD BE MORE COMFORTABLY HOUSED IN THE BRITISH EMBASSY RESIDENCE, THE BRITISH APPROACHED THE GON ON THAT BASIS. THE REACTION OF THE CORONATION COMMITTEE TO THE EFFECT THAT OFFICIAL DELEGATIONS SHOULD STAY IN THE ACCOMMODATIONS WHICH HMG WOULD PROVIDE HAS NOW BEEN STRONGLY REAFFIRMED BY PRINCE GYANENDRA, WHO HAS BEEN GIVEN "FULL POWERS" BY HIS MAJESTY TO COORDINATE CORONATION ARRANGEMENTS. AMBASSADOR SCOTT INFORMS US THAT HE HAS REPORTED THIS TO LONDON AND BELIEVES LONDON WILL FALL IN WITH THE NEPALESE DESIRES. THE ONLY WAY, SCOTT SAYS, THE PICTURE MIGHT BE CHANGED, WOULD BE BY A DIRECT APPEAL TO KING BIRENDRA HIMSELF. AMBASSADOR SCOTT BELIEVES LONDON WILL BE VERY RELUCTANT TO MAKE SUCH AN APPEAL BECAUSE OF THE EVIDENT

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FEELINGS OF THE NEPALESE CONCERNING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AS

HOSTS AS THEY SEE THEM, THE RISK OF DENTING THE GOOD RELATIONS PREVAILING BETWEEN THE TWO ROYAL FAMILIES, AND THE FACT THAT A DIFFERENT OUTCOME WOULD REQUIRE THE KING TO OVERRULE PRINCE GYANENDRA, WHICH THE BRITISH WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO PRESS FOR.

2. AMBASSADOR SCOTT ALSO TOLD US THAT, IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PALACE ADVISOR CHIRAN THAPA AND OTHER NEPALESE OFFICIALS REGARDING THE HOUSING OF PRINCE HARLES, HE HAD MADE THE POINT THAT IF HEADS OF DELEGATIONS WERE TO BE EXPECTED TO STAY IN THE ACCOMMODATIONS PROVIDED BY HMG, THIS WOULD NECESSARILY HAVE TO APPLY ACROSS-THE-BOARD TO ALL DELEGATIONS. THE NEPALESE, SCOTT SAYS, HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THIS.

3. MEANWHILE, THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAS INDICATED HIS EXPECTATION THAT THE SOVIET CORONATION DELEGATION WILL STAY IN THE ACCOMMODATIONS PROVIDED BY THE NEPALESE. WE HAVE DRAWN THIS INFERENCE FROM THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS ABOUT THE COMPLETE INADEQUACY OF FACILITIES AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY TO ACCOMMODATE A HIGH-LEVEL SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE AND HIS EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AS TO WHETHER THE NEPALESE WOULD MAKE ADEQUATE SPACE AVAILABLE IN THE SOALTEE HOTEL FOR THE OFFICIAL DELEGATION.

4. COMMENT. AMBASSADOR SCOTT HAS PROMISED TO KEEP US INFORMED OF ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. SINCE THE U.S. DELEGATION HAS NOT YET BEEN NAMED, WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF ACCOMMODATIONS WITH GON OFFICIALS. HOWEVER, IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE NEPALESE ARE DUG IN VERY FIRMLY ON THE PROPOSITION THAT OFFICIAL GUESTS OF HIS MAJESTY FOR THE CORONATION, PARTICULARLY HEADS OF DELEGATIONS, SHOULD ACCEPT THE ACCOMMODATIONS PROVIDED BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT.

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